



## HISTORY

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Mission Beach is built entirely upon a sand bar created by joint action of the San Diego River and the Pacific Ocean. Because of the difficulties in developing on sand, Mission Beach developed later than its neighbors, Pacific Beach and Ocean Beach. A subdivision syndicate composed of the Rife Brothers, George L. Barney and John F. Forwards, Jr., made some of the first improvements to Mission Beach, including the bridge connecting Mission Beach with Ocean Beach.

In 1914, encouraged by the success of land sales in nearby Ocean Beach and Pacific Beach, John D. Spreckles offered lots for sale with George L. Barney acting as a general agent. Starting in 1916, J.M. Asher built a tent city, a large swimming pool, a bay front pier and a bathhouse. Activity in the beach community soon encouraged the transit company to extend the streetcar line from Ocean Beach to Mission Beach. The tent city continued to prosper and was an attraction until about 1922. At that time the City of San Diego's new health code resulted in the removal of non-permanent dwellings. Before they disappeared, however, permanent houses began to spring up in Mission Beach.

In 1925, in order to stimulate real estate sales and to increase the income of the electric railway which he owned, John D. Spreckles built the present Mission Beach amusement center, now called Belmont Park, at a cost of about \$4,000,000. San Diegans flocked to the beach and the center maintained its popularity. At the death of John Spreckles, his organization granted the entire amusement center to the City of San Diego for the enjoyment of its people. Eventually, at the urging of the Mission Beach Civic Organization and other civic groups, California made Mission Bay a state park. Later, San Diego took over the area from the state, recognizing the recreational potential of the bay. This was the beginning of Mission Bay Park which was opened in September, 1949.

The removal of the rail line and the bridge to Ocean Beach and the development of West Mission Bay Drive through the park resulted in the circulation system that Mission Beach has today. The last decade has seen the beginning of a change in the character of the residential buildings in the community from small cottages to apartments.

The situation of Mission Beach makes it one of the most unique recreational areas in San Diego. In spite of its location between the bay and the ocean, Mission Beach has not transformed from a residential to a recreational community.